



~~IN~~ THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

)

1

1

;

1

4

;

)

4

)

;

)

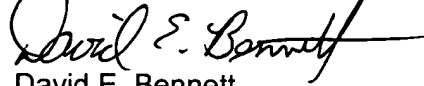
1

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the Group I and Group II claims be merged into a single group for prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

By:

COATS & BENNETT, P.L.L.C.



David E. Bennett

Registration No. 32,194

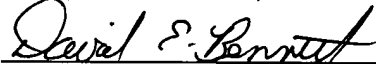
P.O. Box 5

Raleigh, NC 27602

Telephone: (919) 854-1844

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS DOCUMENT IS BEING DEPOSITED WITH THE UNITED STATE POSTAL SERVICE, ON THE DATE INDICATED, AS FIRST CLASS MAIL, POSTAGE PREPAID, IN AN ENVELOPE ADDRESSED TO: **MS NON-FEE AMENDMENT, COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS**
P.O. BOX 1450, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1450

Signature: _____

Name: David E. Bennett

Date: 1/16/04_____